

May 2020

# The Trapline

United States Department of  
Agriculture  
Animal & Plant Health  
Inspection Service  
Wildlife Services



Cooperating with:  
Nevada  
Department of Agriculture  
Division of Animal Industry



[www.agri.nv.gov](http://www.agri.nv.gov)  
#775-851-4848

## Mission Statement

The Nevada Wildlife Services Program (WS) is a collaborative program involving the Nevada Department of Agriculture's Division of Animal Industry (State) and the USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services Program (federal), whose mission is to protect agriculture, natural resources, property, and the human health and safety of the citizens of Nevada from the threat of injury, damage, or resource loss due to wildlife.

## Introduction

During May, wildlife damage management work was conducted on an estimated **5** million acres of land under agreement. On these lands, WS personnel helped Nevada's farmers and ranchers protect over **\$93** million in agricultural resources such as cattle, sheep, and livestock feed; and over **\$26** million in natural resources. Additionally, WS assisted **277** persons and entities with technical assistance which involves providing information or equipment to cooperators so they can resolve problems themselves. Cooperators reported **\$17,017.00** in damage and WS Specialists verified **\$42,440** in damage to agricultural resources and property. These losses would be much higher without an effective wildlife damage management program. During May, coyotes accounted for **\$25,795** in verified losses, mostly to livestock, and **294** coyotes were taken with a variety of management methods to resolve these and other ongoing complaints. WS routinely collects blood samples or oral swabs from species taken or handled during normal control activities for monitoring the presence of plague, avian influenza, and other diseases. In May, **no** samples were processed.

*The following excerpts are a selection of activities and events of this program which occurred during the months of May, 2020.*

## Resource Protection State Office

During the reporting period, the State Office provided non-lethal recommendations to Nevadan's to assist in alleviating their conflicts with wildlife, particularly coyotes and raccoons. For more information about resolving conflicts with wildlife, please go to the following website: <http://agri.nv.gov/Wildlife>. Where wildlife biology and damage management methods are offered by species.

**East District**

During the first 2 weeks of May, Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) Field Assistant (FA) Allen Eldridge confirmed the loss of 3 ewes and 11 lambs, valued at \$2,950, to coyote predation. The damage occurred on 2 bands of sheep in western White Pine County. FA Eldridge used foothold traps and trail snares to remove 3 coyotes. The Ely plane and Utah helicopter removed an additional 5 coyotes. Work will be ongoing as needed during the lambing season. FA Eldridge also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.

During the first half of May, Wildlife Specialist (WS) Nathan Fowler confirmed the loss of at least 20 lambs, valued at \$4,000, to coyote predation. The damage took place in northern White Pine and southern Elko Counties. WS Fowler used foothold traps, trail snares and calling to remove 4 coyotes. The Ely plane and the Utah helicopter removed 17 more coyotes near the 2 bands of sheep. Work is ongoing as lambing continues. On several occasions, WS Fowler provided technical assistance in an effort to help prevent more losses.



On May 4<sup>th</sup>, the Elko plane responded to a call from 2 cattle ranchers in eastern Elko County. The 2 ranches adjoin each other and 1 of the ranchers reported the loss of 1 calf, valued at \$600, to coyote predation. The other rancher reported seeing several coyotes in his calving pastures. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 6 coyotes, bringing an end to the problem. The 2 ranchers were very pleased with the help they received from Wildlife Services and the Nevada Department of Agriculture.

On May 6<sup>th</sup> and May 8<sup>th</sup>, the Elko plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in northern Elko County. The sheep producer has had very high historical losses in this area and reported that his herders were hearing and seeing coyotes every day in and around his sheep. With the assistance of WS Tom Smith as the ground crew, the plane was able to remove 7 coyotes near the sheep. Work will continue as needed. WS Smith also provided non-lethal technical assistance to help prevent future losses.

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, a helicopter was brought to central Nevada from Utah to fly for several Nevada Wool Growers. An agreement is in place with several Nevada sheep men to provide helicopter operations during lambing season. The helicopter flew for 6 different sheep producers, removing 43 coyotes near the sheep. Removing coyotes in and around sheep while lambing has proven to reduce losses greatly. Funding for this operation is paid for by the sheep producers themselves in cooperation with the Nevada Wildlife Services program and the Nevada Department of Agriculture.

On May 11<sup>th</sup>, the Elko plane responded to a call from a sheep producer in southern Elko County near the White Pine County line. The sheep producer had just recently began to lamb out and had already lost more than 15 lambs, valued at \$3,000, to coyote predation. During the flight, the plane was able to remove 2 coyotes. The first coyote was in the band of sheep and had just killed a lamb and the other coyote was just leaving the band of sheep. Work will continue as needed. WS Randy Evans also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to help minimize future losses.

On May 13<sup>th</sup>, WS Tom Smith confirmed the loss of 1 ewe and 5 lambs, valued at \$1,250, to coyote predation. The damage took place on a remote band of sheep in central Elko County. WS Smith used foothold traps, trail snares and calling to remove 10 adult coyotes near the kill. WS Smith also requested the help from the Elko plane, resulting in the removal of an additional 12 coyotes near the band of sheep experiencing the losses. No further losses have been reported. WS Smith also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses.



On May 15<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a call from a cattle rancher in central Nye County. The rancher reported the loss of 3 calves, valued at \$2,600, to coyote predation. During the flight, the plane was able to locate and remove 4 coyotes near the kills. One of the coyotes was observed killing a young antelope fawn. The coyote had the baby antelope in its mouth and was shaking it while 3 adult doe antelope were kicking and stomping the coyote. The plane had to make a couple of passes to scare the coyote into the clear before it was promptly shot. Work will continue as needed. The rancher was very pleased with the help he received from the USDA Wildlife Services and the Nevada Department of Agriculture.

On May 15<sup>th</sup>, the East District office received a call concerning a lion sighting in Elko County. The reporting party stated that his neighbor jumped a large lion near his shed. The reporting party owns a flock of about 300 sheep and was worried that the lion may have, or was about to kill some of his sheep. The Elko Pilot and Crew Member (CM) responded to the incident. Due to recent rains in the area, no lion sign was found. Technical assistance was provided in an attempt to prevent future losses. Wildlife Services will continue to monitor the area for damage.

On May 19<sup>th</sup>, WS Fowler confirmed the loss of 2 lambs, valued at \$400, to coyote predation. The damage took place on a band of sheep in southern Elko County. WS Fowler used trail snares to remove 4 coyotes. No further losses have been reported. WS Fowler also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations in an effort to help prevent future losses.



On May 21<sup>st</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a call from a rancher in western White Pine County. The rancher has a farm flock of sheep and reported the loss of at least 3 lambs, valued at \$600, to coyote predation. The rancher reported that she was seeing a coyote near her flock of sheep on a regular basis. During the flight, the plane was able to locate and remove 2 coyotes near the sheep. No further losses have been reported.

On May 22<sup>nd</sup> and May 26<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane flew areas for Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) Project 38. The project is designed to protect both antelope and mule deer during fawning. Seven coyotes were removed during the effort. Work will be ongoing.

On May 27<sup>th</sup>, the Ely plane responded to a call from 2 cattle ranches north of Ely, Nevada. Both ranchers had previously lost calves to coyote predation. During the flight, the plane was able to locate and remove 4 coyotes. Work will continue as needed.



During the first part of May, FA Scott MacDonald confirmed the loss of over 30 lambs, valued at \$6,000, to raven predation. FA MacDonald used hard boiled eggs treated with DRC-1339 to remove 24 ravens that had been causing much of the damage. FA MacDonald also provided technical assistance in the form of non-lethal recommendations to help prevent future losses. Work will continue as needed.



### **West District**

During the first week of May, FA Alex Wallis protected several lamb bands and various other smaller sheep and goat flocks in Lyon County. Specifically, WS Wallis removed 3 coyotes with the use of foothold traps. Livestock producers are pleased with the protection efforts FA Wallis provided. FA Wallis will continue to protect livestock in his work area.

On May 10<sup>th</sup> thru May 12<sup>th</sup>, District Supervisor (DS) Jack Spencer provided field training to WS Josiah Yoder in Lander County. DS Spencer also provided ground crew training for helicopter operations. On May 11<sup>th</sup> and May 12<sup>th</sup> the helicopter operation resulted in the removal of 16 coyotes, which had recently killed 6 lambs, valued at \$1,200. DS Spencer and WS Yoder also met with livestock producers in the area.



On May 15<sup>th</sup>, Instructor Pilot (IP) Wes Gossard and CM Brandon VanderMay flew several lambing and calving areas in Washoe County in response to the reported loss of 8 lambs, valued at \$1,600, to coyote predation. Three coyotes were removed during the operation. FA Doug Koepke provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection efforts will continue.

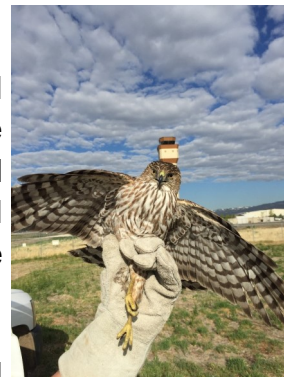
On May 21<sup>st</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay flew 4 lambing and calving areas in Washoe County in response to the reported loss of 111 lambs, valued at \$25,200, to coyote predation over the last 2 months. A large portion of the lambing area is located in a wilderness study area, where protection efforts are not conducted due to a settlement agreement. The sheep producer also reported that 15 lambs had been killed by golden eagles, a rare occurrence for the area. The sheep producer also explained that rabbit numbers were the lowest that he has seen. The result of the fixed wing operation was the removal of a pair of coyotes feeding on a freshly killed lamb. FA



Koepke provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection efforts will continue where allowed.

On May 26<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay flew several lambing areas in Lander County. Although WS Yoder wasn't finding many kills, coyotes tend to pack off the small lambs, leaving no trace behind. The effort resulted in the removal of 6 coyotes. WS Yoder provided ground support and located several of the coyotes for the plane to remove. Protection efforts will continue.

During the month of May, WS Cameron Green and WS Reed Thomas continued implementing a newly completed Wildlife Hazard Management Plan at a joint use aviation facility in Washoe County. In addition to harassment efforts, several birds of prey were trapped and translocated to suitable habitat away from aerial operations. Several prey-base reduction projects were also conducted to reduce the predators utilization of the facility. Protection efforts will be ongoing.



On May 27<sup>th</sup>, IP Gossard and CM VanderMay flew several lambing and calving areas in Washoe County along the CA-NV border. The herder reported that he had been seeing a lone coyote almost daily on a freshly killed lamb, but was not able to shoot it. The aerial crew quickly found the coyote feeding on a freshly killed lamb and removed it. WS-CA George Affonso provided ground support during aerial operations. Protection efforts will continue.

During the month of May, WS John Peter protected several sheep bands in Humboldt County. WS Peter reports that the coyote damage is really low and that this is one of the best lambing seasons in 36 years. WS Peter will continue to protect livestock in his large work area.



During the month of May, WS Ben Miller continued protecting California bighorn sheep in northern Nevada as part of NDOW project 37. WS Miller has call boxes and trail snares placed along lion travel corridors that lead to the wild sheep.

During the month of May, Wildlife Biologist (WB) David Carrasco performed wildlife damage management duties at a military aviation facility in southern Nevada. WB Carrasco dispersed 230 birds from the active airfield, which consisted of great-tailed grackles, mourning doves, white-faced ibises and a red-tailed hawk. WB Carrasco also removed 53 great-tailed grackles, 44 mourning doves, 19 pigeons, 24 jack rabbits, 17 desert cotton tailed rabbits, 1 Canada geese, 1 red-tailed hawk, a house finch and pigeon nest to reinforce non-lethal measures. WB Carrasco was also able to trap and translocate a red-tailed hawk to suitable habitat away from aircraft operations. WB Carrasco continues to conduct bird surveys and protect the airfield from the threat of wildlife.

## **New and Developing Methods**

Nothing to Report

## **Valuing and investing in Employees**

Nothing to Report

## **Information and Communication**

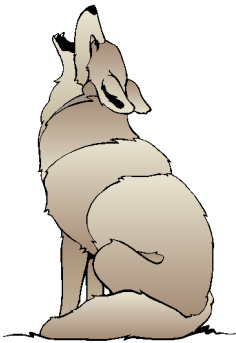
Nothing to Report

## **Future Meeting and Events**

Nothing to Report

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«AddressBlock»



USDA APHIS

